

THE MAGICIAN'S SON

THE STORY OF THROCKTON

CHAPTER 6

“Maybe you should say it louder.” Germania suggested.

“AGAR, DONI, SWASA, GONDORDI!” Throckton yelled.

Still they were at the door.

“I have an idea. I’ll do a spell that will carry us across to the other side,” Throckton said as he thought for a moment.

“Are you sure it will work?” Germania asked. “I don’t want to fall all the way to the bottom.”

Germania and the others looked down into the deep abyss.

“OK, I think I’ve got it,” Throckton began. “Abli, nas, ondo, slabdi!”

Suddenly they were in a very different place.

They looked around. They were in a hallway they hadn’t seen before.

“Oops, I may have gotten that spell wrong,” Throckton said a little sheepishly.

There was a door in front of them. When they looked behind them, the hallway seemed to go on forever.

“Should we go through that door?” asked Germania.

“I don’t know what else to do,” Throckton answered.

The first key they tried opened the door once again.

A dim light shown through the crack of the door as it opened. They opened the door slowly and walked into a beautifully decorated room.

There was a large window to the left with blue drapes that reached to the ground.

The room was not very bright since the light was coming from a single candle on a table next to the window.

What they saw next scared them so much they were unable to speak. It was Malinda. They had walked into her room.

Throckton could only say, “Oops, oh-oh.”

This was not what they had expected at all. As one might expect, Malinda did not look happy. Standing next to her was Gossling.

She never said a word. She just stared at them with a very angry look.

After looking at them in disgust, Malinda spoke up, “Do you think we didn’t know what you have been planning? Do you really think we are that stupid?”

Looking right at Throckton, Gossling said, “Throckton, you know what? I think *you* are the stupid little man!”

He remembered what Throckton had said to him on the day he first arrived at the Magician’s Academy.

“I’m going to send you somewhere while I think about what we are going to do next,” Malinda said, as she raised her hand.

Throckton found himself in another small room where he could not stand up nor turn around. It was different this time. Instead of getting hot, he was getting very cold. The box was made of ice.

He could hear the voices of the other students screaming. Some said they were hot while others said they were cold.

Throckton heard the others as they screamed and begged to get out. He heard them apologize and one by one the voices went away, until he was the last one.

“It’s OK. I can take this. I don’t like it, but I know you won’t kill me. You would have to answer to too many people if you killed me,” Throckton yelled out in defiance.

“You can stay in there as long as you like. Throckton, you’re correct, we won’t kill you, but you’ll not be very comfortable, Malinda informed him.

“See you in the morning,” Malinda’s voice came through the silence.

Throckton struggled to find a position that was comfortable, but he finally gave up. He could not feel his hands or his feet. His nose was running and he could not wipe it.

“OK, I’m sorry, can I get out of here now?” Throckton yelled.

Nothing happened.

He said it again.

He was still in the box.

Throckton tried all of the magic spells he could think of, but none of them worked.

All night he remained in the box of ice.

Suddenly in the morning, he found himself in the middle of the dining hall, on the floor, covered in ice.

He could not move because his legs were so cold.

When he looked up, he saw sitting at the table with the teachers were Gore, Germania, Filmore, and Tomlin.

He guessed that they had been spies and that they had been working for the teachers all along. It made him very upset, but he was unable to speak because he was so cold. His eyes told them what he was thinking.

“Get up Throckton!” Malinda screamed at Throckton, showing her anger at him.

Throckton slowly got up off the floor. As he did, he looked around at all of the other students in the school. They were all looking at him, and there was silence in the room.

“Throckton, what you have done is very serious. According to the contract you signed before you entered the Magicians Academy, you are to be punished,” Malinda said to him.

“Contract? What contract? I never signed a contract,” Throckton said defensively, while trying to get warmed up.

Malinda showed him the contract with his signature, and replied, “You signed this agreement before you came here. Your father sent it to us along with your application and fees.”

Looking at the contract, Throckton said, "I don't remember this."

"That's not our problem. When you signed it, you agreed to complete all of your classes and to maintain a good standing in the school. It says that if you purposely break any of our rules, you will be punished," Malinda showed him the paragraph.

"The consequences are spelled out very clearly. It says that if you don't abide by the agreement, you are be sentenced to the mines for as long as you live. You signed this so you are subject to it," Malinda explained.

"I signed it to make my dad happy. I thought if I signed it, he would not send me here," Throckton answered.

Continuing he said quietly, "But as you know, that didn't work out quite the way I planned it. As a matter of fact, nothing else has either. I wish I had never come here!"

There was a pause of silence in the room.

Then Malinda continued, "Again, that's not our problem. According to your contract with us, you have the right to a trial. If you are found guilty, you'll be sentenced to the mines. You'll never be a magician, you'll never see your family, you'll be a miner forever and ever,"

Visibly frightened, he did not know what to say or do.

Throckton tried to think of a spell that would change his situation, but nothing came to his mind. All he could do was stand there and listen.

"Let the trial begin!" Malinda spoke loudly while she moved behind the long table at the front of the room.

"Our first witness is Gossling. Please take the seat for questioning," Malinda instructed him.

Gossling stood up and then climbed up into the questioning seat. He turned around and faced Malinda.

"Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" Malinda asked Gossling.

"I do," he responded.

“So, Gossling, how long have you known Throckton?” Malinda questioned him.

“I met him on his first day at the school,” he replied.

“And what were your first impressions of him?” she continued.

“I found him to be rude, inconsiderate, and insolent,” he answered.

“Did your opinion of him change while he has been here?” she asked.

“Not really. I have been impressed by how hard he has worked and how good his memory is,” Gossling began. “But since I knew he was planning to try to escape, I knew he was going to get into big trouble soon enough.”

He looked over at Throckton, and said, “I just let him think he was going to get away with it.”

“Do you think he broke his agreement in the contract he signed to enter our school?” she questioned.

“Absolutely. No one in the history of this school has ever broken more rules, been more uncooperative, scheming, and disrespectful than he has,” Gossling said without hesitation.

“Thank you Gossling. You may step down now,” Malinda directed Gossling to leave the chair.

“I would like to call the librarian to the stand. Please come forward,” Malinda said to the librarian who was sitting at the table.

The librarian walked over to the chair and sat down.

“Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?” Malinda asked the librarian.

She responded with a simple, “I do.”

“What are your impressions of Throckton? What kind of person do you think he is?” Malinda asked the librarian.

“I would have to say Gossling did a good job of describing him. Though I might add, I did notice he was always trying to convince other students to follow him. He has been a bad influence on the school and he needs to go,” she finished.

“I call Ms. Dooligan to testify,” Malinda said in a strong voice.

Ms. Dooligan sat in the chair after the librarian got up.

The librarian returned to her seat at the table.

“Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?” Malinda asked Ms. Dooligan.

She responded, “I do.”

“Ms. Dooligan, what is your impression of Throckton?” Malinda posed the question to her.

She looked over at Throckton. Then she looked at Malinda.

“Throckton has not wanted to do much in my class. He is disruptive and disrespectful. The other children do not like him. He doesn’t want to be a part of my class and he doesn’t want to be a part of this school. He should be punished. I have never voted for a student to be expelled before, but in this case I think it is the correct thing to do,” Ms. Dooligan finished.

One by one, the teachers sat in the questioning seat. Most of the teachers said much the same thing about him.

Throckton was not comfortable. He did not like what they were saying about him, but he had no defense. What they were saying was true and he knew it, but he still did not care. He just wanted to go home.

“Is there anyone who would like to say something in defense of Throckton?” Malinda asked.

Gossling surprised everyone by standing to speak on behalf of Throckton.

“One thing I have to say. No student has ever worked as hard to pass their exams than he. You should all take a lesson from him. If any of you worked half as hard as he has, you would be much more successful. Think about it.”

Gossling sat down after speaking.

Varanda, a first year student, stood up to speak.

She said, “It’s not fair. Throckton was set up to fail. No one advised him that he

was being watched, and no one tried to stop him. I feel he was trapped.

“Why didn’t the four other students who were with him tell him the truth? Why are they not also on trial? They broke the student trust we all try to abide by – you know, the unspoken rule of student brotherhood.”

Malinda responded, “The brotherhood of students should not be under consideration here since the contract specifically states exactly what the rules are concerning this situation. Student loyalty is not what is on trial today.”

Varanda sat down and crossed her arms. She was not happy with Malinda’s response.

“Is there anyone else who would like to speak for Throckton?” Malinda asked again.

The room was silent. No one else spoke.

Turning to Throckton, she asked, “Do you have anything to say for yourself?”

“All I can say is that I don’t remember what the contract said. I don’t feel I should be held to it,” Throckton answered.

“That doesn’t change the agreement,” Malinda told him. “You signed it. You are responsible to it.”

Malinda turned to the teachers and asked, “I’ll now ask for a vote from the teachers. How many of you say we should send Throckton to the mines?”

Every one of the teachers raised their hands.

“Now that the teachers have voted, I will now ask the students. How many of you students feel the judgment of the teachers is fair?” she put the question to the students in the room.

Every hand went up except one. It was Varanda.

“With only one objection we agree that Throckton should be sent away,” Malinda gave the verdict of the vote.

“Nobody here has liked me anyway. I’ll show all of you!” and, in a flash, he ended up in the mines.

The place was dark and confining. He had never experienced a place like this before. It was not as bad as the small rooms Malinda had sent him to, but it was not going to be fun either.

He found himself standing in front of a very big man who had a long whip in his hand. It was hot in the mines so he did not have a shirt on. His muscles were large and his face did not have a smile.

He looked down at Throckton and said, "I've been expecting you. Based on your reputation, I thought you would have arrived much sooner. I have a lot of work for you to do," he informed Throckton.

"My reputation?" Throckton asked.

The big man answered, "Yes, I hear about all of the students in the academy. When I hear about someone like you, I know it is only a matter of time before you arrive here. You are not alone. There are others here in the mines who were like you and who were sentenced to work with me."

"My name is Dron and I'm the overseer here. You'll do as I say or you'll feel the pain of my whip on your back. Do you understand?" Dron posed the question to Throckton while looking down at him.

"Yes sir," is all he could muster.

Throckton realized that he was in a completely different place. The big man who was in front of him seemed to be serious. He was really scared for the first time in his life.

Dron called his assistant, Cropter, to take Throckton to his place in the mines.

"Cropter, take Throckton to his new job. Show him what he is to do. Make sure he understands everything. I don't want any excuses from him. I'm expecting him to work as hard as any of the other workers. Do you understand me?" Dron asked Cropter.

"Yes sir. I'll do as you ask," Cropter responded while showing respect to Dron.

Cropter took Throckton down a long tunnel that was very dark. Except for the light on Cropter's helmet, he could not see anything at all.

“What is this place?” Throckton asked.

“Didn’t they tell you?” Cropter answered.

“Well, they told me I was going to the mines, but I don’t know what that means,” Throckton answered.

“This is the consequence of your actions in the school. Your contract you signed was quite clear about that,” Cropter started to explain.

“I told them I never read the contract. I have no idea what is happening or why I’m here,” Throckton looked for sympathy from Cropter.

“You won’t get far with me kid. Your parents sent you to this school for a reason. It was up to you to figure that out,” Cropter answered him. “Now you are here to work. I hope you work hard so Dron doesn’t have to punish you.”

After a walking a little farther, Copter stated, “I hear you are a fast learner. That will be useful for you here. We need hard workers.”

“What are we mining for here?” Throckton asked.

“You don’t need to know that. You just need to dig. We’ll take care of the rest,” Cropter replied. “I suggest you don’t get lazy. Dron doesn’t like lazy people. It will be much harder on you if you decide not to go along with our rules.”

His first day in the mines was the most miserable day of his life. It was even worse than when he was in the small room Malinda had sent him to.

All day long, he dug in the dirt. He dug dirt until he had blisters on top of blisters. His hands hurt so badly he had to put them into cool water.

“I can’t do this anymore!” Throckton yelled out in pain.

One of the other workers wrapped a cloth around his hands.

“Here, this will help a little. Soon enough you will have callouses. Then your hands will be used to the work,” the worker said as she poured cool water onto the cloth.

“What’s your name?” Throckton asked.

“I’m Lundra. Who are you?” she asked.

“I’m Throckton. How long have you been here?” he asked another question.

“I don’t know. It’s been a long time. When you are here, you can’t tell the time. There are no calendars and we can’t see the sun. Do you know what the date is?” she asked.

Throckton told her what the date was on the day he left the school.

“If that’s the case, then I guess I’ve been here for about ten years,” she replied.

“Ten years?! I don’t know if I can last that long,” Throckton blurted out.

“You’ll get used to it, you’ll see,” Lundra smiled.

Lundra was not very tall and because of her time in the mines, she was very skinny. It was hard to tell exactly what she looked like because there was so much mud on her face. She had sparkling blue eyes that told her story of regret for the things she had done to deserve to be sent to the mines.

“GET TO WORK YOU TWO!” yelled Dron. “Be quiet and start digging or I’ll have to use my whip!”